A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE

PARISH-CHURCH of TYNEMOUTH,

DECEMBER 12. 1784.

Occasioned by the DREADFUL STORM at SEA,
December 5th, 6th, and 7th, 1784.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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Occasioned by the DREADFUL STORM at SEA,
December 5th, 6th, and 7th, 1784.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A LIST OF THE SHIPS

That suffered in the Gale, between Whitby and Berwick.

BY THE REV. W. HASWELL, LECTURER.

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M.DCC.LXXXV.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

INHABITANTS of the PARISH of TYNEMOUTH,

THIS SERMON,

PUBLISHED FOR THE RELIEF OF

THE DISTRESSED WIDOWS AND ORPHANS,

BELONGING TO THAT PLACE,

WHOSE HUSBANDS AND FATHERS PERISHED IN

THE LATE STORM,

IS MOST HUMBLY INSCRIBED,

AS A TESTIMONY OF GRATITUDE AND ESTEEM,

BY THE

Dec. 20. 1784.

AUTHOR.

A

SERMON.

PROVERBS xxvii. 1.

Boaſt not thyſelf of to-morrow, for thou knoweſt not what a day may bring forth.

WE have a great many cautions of this ſort in the ſacred Scriptures:—Cautions highly neceſſary for us in this frail ſtate of exiſtence.—But notwithſtanding the abſolute neceſſity of them, (which is apparent from every day's experience); yet, how very care-

leſs and inattentive are we to ſuch inſtructive, ſalutary truths!—Doth not this manifeſtly prove the inconſiſtency of man, and clearly point out the degeneracy of his nature!—Lectures on the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of life, and of every terreſtrial object, are perpetually ſounded in his ears, or preſented to his ſight, "yet man—fool man, here buries all his thought *,"—plans ſchemes for his future conduct, and prepares for the *body* and *its* gratifications, as if this were his everlaſting abode: never once caſting a thought towards that country, wherein his *better* part muſt be happy or miſerable for ever!—What ſtrange infatuation in rational beings!—to prefer the ſhadow to the

* Young.

the ſubſtance!—to build all our hopes upon the ſand of time, inſtead of fixing them upon the rock of eternal ages!—On ſuch a precarious foundation, what have we to boaſt of?—For, whether we are poſſeſſed of all that this world eſteems delectable, or not:—whether we flaunt it at the maſquerade, or take our humble repoſe on a bed of ſtraw—ſo ſlender is our tie to earth, in every ſituation, that we may be torn from it without even a moment's warning.—— We "*know not what a day may bring forth*"—it behoves us, therefore, "*not to boaſt of to-morrow.*"

To expoſe their folly, who preſumptuouſly flatter themſelves with future enjoyment here, and to make ſome prac-

tical reflections—is the purport of this diſcourſe.——

Let each of us lay his hand upon his breaſt, and ſeriouſly aſk—of what has man to boaſt?——Is it riches?—Hear what Solomon ſaith concerning them: *Wilt thou ſet thine eyes upon that which is not?—for riches certainly make to themſelves wings and fly away* *.—— The careful, thrifty man, who, by much pains and anxiety, is become the poſſeſſor of thouſands, may (through misfortunes, generally ſo called, but more properly through the diſpenſations of an almighty Providence) be reduced to very ſtrait circumſtances—nay even to poverty itſelf.—On a ſudden, (to follow the

* Proverbs xxiii. 5.

the Scripture ſimile), when he is leaſt expecting it, they may take wing, like *an eagle towards heaven*, and fly away, never to return.

Is it not then folly, in the extreme, to place our affections on ſuch objects as we may be deprived of by a thouſand accidents?—And not only ſet our affections upon them, but glory in them, and make our boaſt of them!—Nay, what is worſe, perhaps aſſume an air of conſequence, on account of our poſſeſſions, and look down with an eye of ſovereign contempt on thoſe who are (I do not ſay, leſs fortunate, but who are called) the poor of this world; although, at the ſame time, they may be, for ought we know, rich in faith, favourites

vourites of God, and heirs of heaven.

VAIN-GLORIOUS man!—*Who maketh thee to differ from another?—and what haſt thou that thou didſt not receive* *?—which was not liberally beſtowed on thee by the ſuperlative goodneſs of God?—and beſtowed for *this very purpoſe*, that thou mighteſt be the channel thro' which the ſtreams of his mercy might flow to the afflicted and diſtreſſed!——Pardon this digreſſion.—To return.—One of the Apoſtles *chargeth us not to truſt in uncertain riches* †. In another place, he exhorteth us to *ſet our affections on things above, not on things on the earth* ‡;—for which he aſſigns this very ſufficient

* 1 Cor. iv. 7. † 1 Tim. vi. 17. ‡ Col. iii. 2.

ſufficient reaſon; becauſe *the faſhion of this world paſſeth away**.

LET *not the rich man glory in his riches;* neither let the ſons of men glory in any thing, except in *this, ſaith the Lord, that he underſtandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord, which exerciſe loving kindneſs, judgment, and righteouſneſs in the earth; for in theſe things I delight, ſaith the Lord* †.

OF thus much are we informed by the word of God, relative to our boaſting of worldly wealth, becauſe of its uncertainty:—But if unbelieving hearts ſtill doubt the ſacred aſſertion, we cannot ſurely diſpute ocular demonſtration:

Let

* 1 Cor. vii. 31. † Jerem. ix. 24.

Let us turn, then, our eyes on the vaſt and dreadful havoc made upon the neighbouring ſhores by the late truly calamitous ſtorm:—and we muſt be conſtrained to acknowledge, that He, who giveth us all things richly to enjoy, can, at his pleaſure, recal thoſe temporal bleſſings.—Not only *fire and hail, ſnow and vapour fulfil his word* *; but *ſtorm and tempeſt* are the winged meſſengers of his wrath, and punctually execute his dread commands.

HEREIN we have before our eyes an inconteſtible and melancholy inſtance of the uncertainty of *riches*:—and we might, if the time would permit us, clearly point out the uncertainty of every

* Pſalm cxlviii. 8.

every *other* enjoyment on earth;—but that will, in a great meaſure, be rendered unneceſſary, by ſhewing on how *precarious* a tenure even *life itſelf* is held.

SETTING aſide the daily occurrences, which give pain to the ſenſible mind, and deeply wound its peace;—not to mention the troubles, which are unavoidably our lot, in this ſtate of probation here below;—all which ought to wean our hearts, in ſome meaſure, from being too fond of this world;—there is *another* conſideration which ſhould put the finiſhing ſtroke to this blind attachment—and urge us to provide for a more durable ſettlement, viz. the *total uncertainty of life.*

The Scriptures, in numberleſs paſſages, declare this alarming truth:—In one place, man is ſaid to reſemble "*a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vaniſheth away* *:"—In others he is compared to the flower †, which, in the morning, expandeth its gay embroidery; but is withered before the evening cloſe.—And what can better expreſs the vanity of life?—*Some* plants are ſo providentially ſituated, as to continue thro' revolving years to the *lateſt* period of their duration;—but they are comparatively *few*. Either ſcorched by too fervid rays, nipt by the chilling froſt, or blaſted by the vivid lightning; broken down by the ſtormy wind, or plucked up by ſome ruthleſs hand—the far greater

* James iv. 14.

† Job xiv. 2. Pſ. ciii. 15. 16. Iſa. xl. 6. 1 Peter i. 24.

greater number flouriſh not *half* their days.—Striking reſemblance of man!—How few of the human race deſcend to the ſepulchre of their anceſtors in a good old age, compared with the bulk of mankind!—What a multitude is there of thoſe who juſt open the portal of life, only, as it were, to ſhed the tear of miſery, and then retire!—What numbers more who, having ſurmounted the dangers of infancy and childhood, ſeem to taſte the cup of life with ſome reliſh, but no ſooner having ſipped its ſweets, unmixed with care, than, as if apprehenſive of its bitter ſediment, they fly to purer manſions, in a happier world!—Might not the ingenious Hervey, with propriety, call ſuch "happy probationers!" who are thus "accepted

without being exerciſed?"——And of thoſe who arrive at maturer age, are they more ſecure?—Can *they* promiſe themſelves a more certain continuance here, though bleſt with all their hearts can wiſh?—No.—Uncertainty is ſtamped in characters indelible on every ſtage of life.—What! are none exempt?—The *hoary locks* (we know) are a certain prelude to *diſſolution*:—But, may not the *youthful* and the *gay*;—may not *he*, whoſe heart beats high with hopes of future bliſs;—who is a ſtranger to fear;—who laughs and mocks at danger;—*whoſe bones are moiſtened with marrow**; and who is in the meridian of his ſtrength;—may not he, without preſumption, expect years to come?——

No.

* Job xxi. 24.

No.—The avenues to death ſtand ſo thick around us, that we have not a *moment to call our own.*——Whether our Lord ſhall come *at even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning** , we cannot tell:—and thoſe who leaſt expect it, are very frequently the firſt ſurpriſed by him.

To prove this, I need not multiply quotations from the Bible.—Look around you.—What are thoſe bitter lamentations and woful mournings which almoſt every where diſtreſs and wound our ears?—Why heave ſo many boſoms with the labouring ſigh?—Why is diſtraction or concern pictured on every face we meet?—For what do thoſe briny

* Mark xiii. 35.

ny tears ſtream down ſo many cheeks? For what?——It is the tender mother, the diſconſolate widow, the ſincere friend, weeping for their reſpective children, huſband, and boſom companion—*becauſe they are not* *.——Oh! that I could pour the balm of conſolation o'er *their* wounded *ſoul* †!——Gracious Heaven! aſſuage their anguiſh!—ſupport their fainting ſpirits!—chear their drooping hearts!——Whiſper to them glad tidings—*I am God, and there is none elſe* ‡. "Though *I was angry, yet is mine anger turned away, and I will comfort you* §." "*I am God in my holy habitation, and I will be a father to the fatherleſs, and a judge of the widow* **."——"*Leave thy fatherleſs children* to my guardianſhip and

* Matt. ii. 18. † Pſ. cvii. 18 ‡ Iſa. xlv. 22. § Iſa. xii. 1.
** Pſ. lxviii. 5.

and protection, *and let thy widows truſt in me**."

Now, theſe groans and tears are witneſſes to the truth of my aſſertion concerning the uncertainty of life.—Since I ſpake laſt from this place, what multitudes of ſtout hearts have ceaſed to beat!—what numbers of active limbs are ſtretched motionleſs in the cold embraces of Death!—And, at that time, how few of thoſe were apprehenſive, in the leaſt, of ſharing ſuch an untimely, ſo ſevere a fate!——Contrariwiſe, may not we rationally ſuppoſe, that the greateſt part of them were on the wing to reach their deſtined port, and meaſured, in imagination, the length of time

* Jer. xlxix. 11.

which ſeparated them from thoſe whom they held moſt dear.

Oh! that I could deſcribe to you their much-to-be-pitied ſituation throughout the dreadful ſtorm, and paint, in living colours, the tremendous ſcene!—But the moſt pathetic deſcription would be languid—infinitely too languid to convey a faint idea even of half their diſtreſs.—For, who ſhall undertake the arduous taſk of delineating the confuſion, agony, and diſtraction of mind which muſt then have tortured thouſands of precious ſouls?——Not *conception itſelf*, much leſs *words*, can reach it. We muſt have been ſharers in all their ſufferings, to be ſenſible of all their wo, when the griſly tyrant made his viſible

viſible appearance in ſuch a variety of ghaſtly ſhapes:—In ſome, freezing up the purple tide of life;—others overwhelming with terrific waves, or ſwallowing in the wide-extended gulf:—And, as if the monſter were determined to gorge his voracious appetite, he purſues his trembling prey to the fatal ſhores, and numbers of thoſe who haply eſcape his devouring jaws in mid-ocean, are only reſerved to lengthened miſery, and a more excruciating fate.

WHAT, think you, muſt thoſe have felt at that awful criſis!—They, who, before this ſad conjuncture, had *ſo numbered their days, as to apply their hearts unto wiſdom**, and ſought after reconciliation

* Pſalm xc. 12.

with God, through the merits of our Redeemer, *they* would, no doubt, reſign their immortal ſouls, to him who gave them, with Chriſtian fortitude and ſerenity of mind.—But may we not ſuppoſe that *ſome*, among ſuch a number, would bitterly exclaim—"I find, alas! I cannot live, and yet I dare not die!" *Oh! that I had been wiſe; that I had conſidered my latter end*!*——Wretched ſituation!——Others, rent with keeneſt agony, at the thoughts of their beloved wives and infant offspring, now widowed and forlorn;—whilſt not a few were buried in the foaming ſurge, or daſh'd upon the pointed rock with ſuch precipitance, as to preclude even a moment's reflection, and hurried into eternity.

We

* Deut. xxxii. 29.

We might purſue this heart-rending theme until the ſetting ſun—but, even then, little to our profit, unleſs we made a proper uſe of it—unleſs we reſolved to be made wiſer and better by the wondrous leſſon.—*When the judgments of the Lord are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteouſneſs**. This ought to be the prevailing ſentiment of our hearts—this the ultimate deſire of our ſouls, "*to learn righteouſneſs.*"—Give me leave, therefore, as I propoſed, to make ſome practical reflections.—

To you I firſt apply, "*who go down to the ſea in ſhips, and occupy your buſineſs on the great waters; who ſee the works*

* Iſ. xxvi. 9.

*of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep**:
What think ye of the uncertainty of all things here?—Are ye perſuaded that HE, who doeth according "*to his will in the army of heaven, doth alſo what he will among the inhabitants of the earth*?

RECOLLECT the various perils to which ye have been expoſed, and from which ye have been miraculouſly preſerved:—Call to mind your wonderful eſcapes from danger, where nothing but the hand of Providence could have given you the leaſt aſſiſtance—and let your hearts ſwell with gratitude, and your lips extol his praiſe.—Chiefly thoſe of you who have ſo lately experienced his mercy, in a moſt aſtoniſhing deliverance.

Never,

* Pſalm cvii. 24.

Never, never let it ſlip out of your minds, that you were thus marvellouſly ſaved from ſo general a calamity:—ſnatched, not only from a watry tomb—but, it may be, "*pluckt as firebrands out of* eternal *burning* *."—Fall proſtrate before the God of heaven and earth—bewail, with repentant tears, your miſpent life; dedicate yourſelves to his ſervice, adore his infinite goodneſs, and abandon the vile ſervitude of Satan.—Nor be mindful of the *paſt alone*, but look forward to the future.—*Seek ye the Lord, and ye ſhall live* †; and be not *as the dog that returneth to his own vomit again, and the ſow, that was waſhed, to her wallowing in the mire* ‡.—As ye are ſenſible of the many inevitable dangers which attend

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* Amos iv. 11. † Amos v. 6. ‡ 2 Pet. ii. 22.

a maritime life, enſure him for your friend, *who maketh the clouds his chariot; who walketh upon the wings of the wind**.——Get an intereſt in his atoning blood, who died for ſinners, and then have you nothing to fear.—Tho' Heaven's artillery rend the blackening ſky, and jarring elements conſpire to puniſh a guilty world;—you will outride, in ſafety, each deſolating tempeſt, and, in due time, arrive at the haven of eternal repoſe.—And, as an incentive to your diligence in attaining ſo bleſt a ſituation—remember the uncertainty of life—remember that you have been hitherto the ſpared monuments of mercy, only for this purpoſe, that you might turn from the error of your ways unto the

* Pſalm civ. 3.

the living God, and become qualified for the glorious enjoyment of him, in a ſtate of endleſs happineſs.

Nor are we, to whom Providence hath allotted a portion a-ſhore, leſs intereſted in the ſacred warning: *Boaſt not thyſelf of to-morrow.*—Uncertain is the foundation upon which all *our* enjoyments depend:—uncertain *our very exiſtence* in this tabernacle of fleſh.—How neceſſary, then, is it for us immediately to begin the ſervice of our Creator, that we may enjoy him for ever; which was the gracious deſign of God, in ſending us into the world!—Nothing is our portion but *miſery*, if we have not an eye to *his* glory in every tranſaction of our life.—On the other hand, have

we

we not inducements ſufficient to a religious conduct, even on earth?—What *pleaſure* can *excel* that perſon's confidence in God, who *truſts in him, and is not afraid, though the earth be moved, and the mountains be caſt into the midſt of the ſea**?—Or is there any *equal* to that which the truly religious man enjoys, in ſweet communion with his Maker; and in being aſſured *that, if his earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved, he hath a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*†?

THESE are the natural, theſe the genuine effects of piety:—But of *impiety*, what are the conſequences?—Dreadful beyond conception.——Fearful days, and

* Pſ. xlvi. 2. † 2 Cor. v. 1.

and reſtleſs nights :—an inability to enjoy the good things of this life ;—becauſe *the curſe of the Lord is in the houſe of the wicked* *, and upon every thing which he eſteems moſt valuable.—Beſides, if he continues impenitent, it had been better for him if he had never been born ; *for the wicked ſhall be turned into hell ;* and not the wicked only, *but all the people that forget God* †.—— *If the righteous* (thoſe who give all diligence to make their calling and election ſure—if *they*) *ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appear ?* Take the anſwer, full of amazement, from revelation itſelf ;—*but the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and ſorcerers,*

* Prov. iii. 33. † Pſ. ix. 17.

rers, and idolaters, and all liars ſhall have their part IN THE LAKE THAT BURNETH WITH FIRE AND BRIMSTONE *.

How nearly, then, doth it concern us all, to take heed unto our ways!—to beg of God to give us that repentance unto life, not to be repented of, and to endue us with faith, unfeigned, in the merits of his ſon, Chriſt Jeſus, our Lord.

STEADFASTLY, therefore, my brethren, let us purpoſe, through divine grace, to lead righteous, ſober, and godly lives; ever keeping in view the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of this frail ſtate of being.——The conſideration of the

ſhortneſs

* Rev. xxi. 8.

ſhortneſs of life may ſerve to chear our drooping ſpirits in the arduous paths of virtue—knowing that we are not far from our Father's houſe;—and our reflection on *its uncertainty* will tend to purify our hearts from the droſs of ſublunary objects, and make us more *meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the ſaints in light* *.

* Col. i. 12.

FINIS.

BRITISH
3 OCT 79
MUSEUM

A LIST of SHIPS wrecked in the STORM of December 5th, 6th, and 7th, 1784.

OF SHIELDS.

Charles and Jane, Nixon
Friendſhip, Carling
Mary, ditto
Engliſh Hero, Storey
Ann & Mary, Storr Maſter
Spring, Hewſon
Happy Return, Barton
[illegible]urrel, Heſlope
[illegible]ve, Shields,
[illegible] Deſign, Heron
Fa[illegible], J. Scott
Kitty, Watſon
Newcaſtle, Rednead
Joſeph, Smith
Good Agreement, Wright
Dorothy, R. Scott
Roberts, A. Scott
Harmony, Wallis
Traveller's Reſtoration, N. Clark
Betſey, Dun[illegible]

OF NEWCASTLE.

Two Janes, Guy
Good Deſign, Adamſon
Eliſabeth, Greenwell
Adventure, Cram

OF SUNDERLAND.

Providence, Reay
Jenny, Simpſon
Nicholas, Blenkinſop
Folkſtone, Robinſon
Jane, Smith
Union, Shotton
Good Intent, Smart
Providence, Brade
Phœnix, C. Robſon
William, Tone
Proſperous, H. Cowper
Two Siſters, [illegible]. Forſter
Endeavour, Curry
Good Intent, Jobling
A Sloop, Allan, foundered off Tynemouth
A Sloop, Robinſon, ditto

Induſtry, of Hartley, Broderick
Leighton of London, Leighton
Eliſabeth and Mary, of Cullercoats, Armſtrong
Succeſs, of Rocheſter, Garbutt
Thomas, of Yarmouth, Hornſby
Farmer's Indu[illegible]ry of Blakeney ——
Jane, of Borrowſtonneſs, Grindley
Tho[illegible]s and Sarah of [illegible] Ayre Maſter
Nancy of —— Tho[illegible]
Conqueror, Weſt Indi[illegible]
A Brig, unknown
A Sloo[illegible] ditto
May F[illegible]r
Royal Briton, of Whitby, Holt

THUS drove on Shore, but since got off, with considerable Damage.—Those marked thus *, sold as Wrecks.

OF SHIELDS.

Richard, Ro. Clarke
Northumberland, ditto
Broderick, Craister
Venus, Cannaway
Endeavour, Carlin
Lowestoff, Foley
Willington, Scott
Friends, Watson
Betsey, Tuart
Ann & Mary, Burn & Dunn
Industry, Ormsby
Eliz. T. Ware
*Brotherly Love, Be
Providence, Watts
Judith & Jane, Cunningham
Reskoration, Hutchinson
Friend's Regard, N. Clark
Pallas, Shipley
Friendship, Copping

OF NEWCASTLE.

Margaret, Rayne
Perseverance, Jefferson
Mercury, Dr Hall
Adventure, Dove
John, Ramm, Master

OF SUNDERLAND

Mary, Wood
Friendship, Carr
Dorothy & Ann, Havelock
William, ditto
Blackbird, Robinson
Diamond, Wri

Samuel, Blenkinsop
Hannah, Featherstonhaugh
Friendship, Ovington
*Two Brothers, Punchon
Elisabeth & Hannah, Taylor
Ruby, Spraggon
*Nancy, Huntridge

Friend's Adventure, of Yarmouth, Spanton
Rochester, of Roche White
Friendship, of ditto
Hopewell of co. Scarb
*Eliza, of Whitby, Watson
Norfolk, of Lynn, Manser
— of L. Hampton, Scarvell
Brothers of Scarbro' Hopper
Holderness, of Blyth, Watt
Perseverance of Lynn, Ba g
Good In tia, of Erith R. Ware

Ships on Sh yet expected to be got off.

Adventure, of Scarbro
Sea Adventure, of Whitby, Clark
Centurion, of ditto, ditto
Jane, of ditto, Merchant
Lady Maria, of Sunderland, Dodds
*Hartley, of ditto, Rudd
Robert and Ann, of ditto, Young
Granby of Wilbich, Mossom

The above is not given as a perfect List of *all* the Ships which suffered in the Storm, but it is as correct a one as possibly could be procured.

BRITISH MUSEUM 8 00 79